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NASHVILLE-Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits are available to workers in Bledsoe, Blount, Claiborne, Cocke, Hancock, Hawkins, Loudon, and Sevier counties who were out of work as a direct result of severe storms and flooding that occurred January 23-28, 2002, and March 15-20, 2002, Commissioner of Labor & Workforce Development Mike Magill reported today.

“This is a very difficult time for area residents, and we want to make sure that workers who have lost their jobs and are eligible for benefits receive their checks as quickly as possible,” Magill said. “Any workers who feel they may be eligible for benefits should go immediately to their local Labor & Workforce Development office to register for DUA.”

Benefits will be paid under provision of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, which became available when President Bush granted a Presidential Disaster Declaration in Tennessee at Governor Sundquist’s request.

The Department of Labor & Workforce Development administers the program on behalf of the federal government. According to Magill, persons unemployed as a direct result of the severe storms and flooding must file their claim for DUA **benefits within 30 days of this announcement.**

“Individuals who are not covered for regular unemployment benefits may qualify for disaster unemployment benefits,” Magill explained. “This includes self-employed workers and others not covered by the state unemployment insurance program whose source of income has been interrupted by the flooding damage.”

Individuals should take their income tax returns for 2001 with them to the local office, their social security number, and any papers with wage and employment information prior to the disaster.

Weekly DUA benefit amounts are determined in the same way as regular unemployment benefits. Benefits range from \$99 to \$275 per week and are payable up to 26 weeks after the day of declaration, which was April 5, 2002. DUA benefits will end if unemployment is no longer caused by the flooding. Staff at the local Labor & Workforce Development offices will also provide re-employment assistance.

Persons who are unemployed should go to the Labor & Workforce Development office serving their county or an office conveniently located near them as shown below:

County	TDLWD Office Address	PhoneNumber
Bledsoe	224 4 th Ave. Suite 103, Dayton	(423)775-3611
Blount	220 Court Street, Maryville	(865)981 2341
Claiborne	300 Court Street, Tazewell	(423)626-8117
Cocke	440 Eastern Plaza Way, Newport	(423)623-1108
Hancock	955 East McKinney Ave., Rogersville	(423)272-2661
Hawkins	955 East McKinney Ave., Rogersville	(423)272-2661
Loudon	100 West Broadway, Suite 141, Lenoir City	(865)986-5506
Sevier	Shilling Center, 405 Reagan Drive, Gatlinburg	(865)436-5131
	740 Old Knoxville Hwy, Sevierville	(865)429-7001

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The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

El Departamento del Trabajo de (Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development) es un patrono que ofrece igualdad de empleo. Ayudas auxiliares están disponibles para individuos con impedimentos.